

THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY



KAREN POWER — underground since 1969.



BENJAMIN PADDOCK — escaped prisoner.



CHARLES LEE HERRON — fugitive murder suspect.

J. EDGAR

HOOVER'S

HIT PARADE

By KAREN DeYOUNG
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — The recent arrest of Patty Hearst, following a 14-month search through every corner of the nation, saved face for the FBI.

Just when things were looking bleakest, when there were a lot of sniggering whispers about how FBI fugitive-chasing had gone steadily downhill since the halcyon days of Dillinger and Baby Face Nelson, the Bureau came up with the goods and Director Clarence Kelley, who had been getting a lot of bad press, gave himself a long-awaited public pat on the back.

Just don't mention Katherine Ann Power to him, if you want to keep your dossier clean. History may remember Patty Hearst as the most notorious woman of the decade.

Angela Davis may go down as the most outspoken, the most intelligent of female fugitives. You can talk about your Squeaky Frommes, your Susan Adkins, but it is Katherine Ann Power who will lead the FBI annals of female infamy in the 70s.

Because she is the one, so far at least, who got away.

Five years ago, after she successfully conducted what the FBI describes as a "rampage of crime and violence" that left two banks a little poorer and one policeman dead, the Bureau unleashed its ultimate weapon on Power, one it did not even use on Patty Hearst.

It put her on its list of "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" - a surefire ticket to apprehension that, up until 1973, rounded up a yearly average of 13 of America's most vicious criminals.

And she has been on the list ever since - a chubby-faced, bespectacled college girl, smiling a straightforward collegiate smile in an ancient mug shot that probably bears not the slightest resemblance to her anymore.

As any frequenter of post office bulletin boards knows, Power is only one of six current Top Tenners who have served five years or more on the "most wanted" list. Four of them, including Power, who allegedly espoused the cause of an obscure revolutionary group which advocated attacks on the military and police, are holdovers from the bygone days of campus unrest.

Phases

There was a time, during the early 70s, when nailing campus radicals dominated the ambitions of the FBI, just as those ambitions were successively dominated over the years by bank robbers, subversives and Red spies, the Klan and civil rights organizers, and back again to bank robbers and murderers.

The trouble now is that neither the FBI nor anyone else is much interested in campus revolutionaries. Yet Power, along with the team that allegedly blew up an Army research building on the University of Wisconsin campus in 1969 - Leo Burt, David Fine and Dwight Armstrong - are still stuck on the list, taking up places that could go to more current, and imminently dangerous, criminals.

Not that the FBI has had better luck recently with your garden variety crooks and murderers. The list's top two oldtimers, alleged murderer Charlie Lee Herron and escaped federal prisoner Benjamin "Chromedome" Paddock, have been Top Tenners, respectively since 1968 and 1969.

Not only are they making the FBI look dumb, these long-time alumni are a boondoggle in what has formerly been a valuable crimefighting tool.

Getting off

Once placed on the Top Ten list, there are three ways for a criminal to get off: the charges against him may be dropped, which hardly ever happens; he may be proved dead or he may get caught.

Catching criminals used to be easy for the FBI, judging from past statistics. Even before the Top Ten list started in 1950, few of the really big-time crooks and murderers ran free for long. The reason for such quick and frequent apprehensions had to do with attitude - both of the criminals and the public.

People like Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow and Alvin "Old Creepy" Karpis, once designated public enemies, didn't know enough, or maybe didn't have the humility, to lie low after a big caper. Most adored the publicity, hitting the front pages everytime they pulled a holdup or shot some hapless soul.

Criminals often played a game of "I dare you" with lawmen, eventually

J. EDGAR HOOVER — spirit of crimestopping past.

"There are several basic criteria



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Page 1-H

The FBI's 10 most wanted

It's the FBI's most powerful weapon, the top 10 most wanted criminals list. Since it was started a quarter of a century ago, 334 criminals have appeared on its wanted posters and 311 of them have subsequently been caught. But there are

signs this time-honored crimestopping technique is slipping. Captures are down, the public doesn't follow the antics of big-time criminals the way it used to. And the FBI is up against a new kind of fugitive — rebels with a cause.

cesses, helping to get the PR ball rolling was the apprehension of the infamous Willie "The Actor" Sutton, long-time FBI nemesis who became one of the original Top Tenners on March 20, 1950.

The stuff of which Hollywood movies are made, Willie set the standard for Top Ten types by leading law enforcement officers on a merry chase for 25 years before they got him.

Convicted several times for bank robbery by the time he made the newly drawn-up list, Willie had escaped from Sing Sing prison, the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia county prison. His modus operandi, for both escapes and robberies, was disguise.

Local collar

Ironically, the FBI had nothing to do with Willie's final arrest. On Feb. 18, 1952, two Brooklyn policemen picked him up for a routine check after they saw him tampering with a parked automobile.

It was Willie's own car. Then-New York Police Commissioner George Monaghan, beside himself with joy at apprehending so notorious a criminal, called it "the best collar in a long, long time. This ends the greatest manhunt in history," Monaghan effused. "Willie is the Babe Ruth of Bank Robbers, the world's Number One criminal."

When last heard of in 1970, paroled Willie had returned to the banking business — as an actor in TV commercials for the New Britain, Conn., Bank and Trust Company.

The fact that it was local police who finally put the collar on slick Willie did not sit well with the Bureau. Whenever a Top Ten fugitive is apprehended, there is increased publicity.

And increased publicity, as long as it made the FBI look good, has been a Bureau objective ever since Hoover became a nationally published author, with articles like "King of the Bandits," "\$200,000 Rat Trap," "Crime's Leading Lady," and "Buzzards in Disguise."

Even the most low-lying fugitive had to emerge sometime, had to come in contact with at least one other human being occasionally; and the more people who knew his face, the more likely someone would recognize him and run to the FBI.

One of the earliest Top Ten suc-



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Not sure shots

There used to be talk about how the Bureau was so publicity-hungry that a criminal never made the list until his capture was considered both sure and imminent.

FBI press officer Tomm Coll, who until recently headed the publicity arm of the Top Ten program, denies the charge. And the presence of six long-running Top Tenners currently on the list would seem to bear him out.

By the time a criminal gets on the list, Coll says, "we know everything about him . . . except where he is."

Coll and his former boss Jim Healy, who supervised the Top Ten program from 1959 until 1972 and is now assistant special agent in charge of the Springfield, Ill., FBI office, spout Top Ten information in a litany of facts and figures that has become well-honed in years of dealing with the press.

"There are several basic criteria



what he claimed was an "irresistible urge to rob banks," Healy says. "He also claimed he was the best there was at his job - he even gave himself a title: 'King of the Bank Robbers,' and had a crest painted on his convertible and embroidered on his underwear."

Like many criminals, Zavada fell into the trap of believing all the FBI publicity about himself, to the point where he became so enamored of his own notoriety that he gave himself away.

"When we finally got word of Zavada's whereabouts," Healy says, "and agents went out to pick him up, we found out he had planned to call the FBI himself, anonymously, and report his location. He had wired the doorway with dynamite, and planned to blow us up when we came to get him." But Zavada was a little too late; he was nabbed before he got his dynamite trap rigged.

Of 334 Top Tenners since 1950, 311 have been apprehended - seven in 1974, and five so far in 1975. Thirteen have had local charges against them dismissed (the FBI is usually called in on a case when the criminal commits "unlawful flight" — crosses state lines to avoid prosecution. When local charges are dropped, federal warrants are also cancelled in most cases).

More than 100 of these apprehensions, the FBI says, have been as a direct result of citizen participation brought about by media publicity.

By the time a fugitive becomes a Top Tenner, the FBI tries to know more about him than his own mother. "We're looking for the most detailed information," Coll says, "from what kind of cigarettes he smokes down to his favorite brand of whiskey and what kind of women he likes." Bureau press releases have about as much reticence in spilling the dirt to the public as teen "fanzines" do about revealing the Osmond Brothers' favorite brand of deodorant.

Well, maybe just one. George Zavada, a bank robber in the 1960s, had

Top Ten list undeniably has a lot to be proud of.

Its roster holds some of the biggest names in the past 25 years of crime. Joseph Corbett, Jr., the kidnapper-murderer of Colorado industrialist Adolph Coors III, in 1960. Multiple bank robbers and murderers Albert Nussbaum and Bobby Wilcoxson, in 1962. Gary Steven Krist and Ruth Eisemann-Schier, who kidnapped Barbara Jane Mackle and buried her alive in 1968. H. "Rep" Brown. James Earl Ray. Angela Davis. All are Top Ten alumni. But now, there is Katherine Ann Power.

Trouble began

"As soon as they started putting the non-conventional types, the 'cause' criminals on the list," says the former special agent, "they started to have trouble catching them, as a group. Most of the others are 'criminal types,' who are caught by the FBI's very conventional crime-catching methods because they have to keep performing their same criminal acts. They go back to the same places and hang around with the same cronies. These other people just seem to disappear."

If there are legitimate excuses for Powers, Fine, Burt and Armstrong, then what about Herron and Paddock who, Coll admits, "we haven't heard anything about for years."

Lately, America seems to have confined its interest in cops and robbers to "Cannon," "Columbo" and Efrem Zimbalist, Jr. Many newspapers have canceled Dick Tracy and, with people like Richard Nixon under investigation, who gives much thought to the likes of an ordinary escaped prisoner.

Despite heavy publicity campaigns, wanted posters, public service FBI television commercials and magazine stories, how many people on the street would recognize a Top Tenner? Could even name one of them?

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